

WNTC gets Modulator

by Harriet Haynes

In case some students haven't noticed WNTC is back on FM with a good signal for the first time since 1969. The station's new stereo FM modulator finally came in!

WNTC has had trouble with their FM signal ever since they expanded into FM cable. The expansion was a last minute decision, thus no equipment had been budgeted for. The technical engineers, rather than waiting until the following fall, built their own FM modulator out of scrap. It was to be used until the new modulator was budgeted for. This fact, unfortunately, was forgotten. In the following years no money was allocated for a modulator to replace WNTC's makeshift modulator.

The homespun modulator actually wasn't that bad. The signal wasn't especially clear. It had a little problem with drifting and distortion, but no major breakdowns.

Then in 1973 the cable company made some changes in their cable lines. WNTC soon discovered that their modulator was not compatible with the new lines. After hashing out the pros and cons for a few months, two of WNTC's engineers made

modifications on the modulator needed to work with the cable.

This by all rights should have solved all WNTC's FM signal problems. Instead, there developed an excess of noise in the phone line leading from the station to the modulator. This time WNTC's engineers could not correct the problem as the phone lines belong to the phone company and not to WNTC.

When school ended last spring, the phone line hassle still existed. Many WNTC-ites believed the problem would be corrected over the summer. No one was very pleased to find the noise increased when they came back for the fall.

WNTC proceeded to notify the phone company of the fault and request that they find the fault and bring the phone line up to the standards contracted for. Those being a very specific signal to noise ratio and equalization to 15 kilohertz. That call was destined to be one of several made. Not because service men never came, but because no one seemed to be able to find the trouble! Finally the phone company ordered the parts to replace what virtually amounted

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to the whole phone line.

WNTC then had to wait for the parts delivery and installation. After installation it took two more weeks for the phone company to get the lines up to contracted specifications.

In the meantime, the modulator was slowly but surely dying. WNTC wasn't totally off FM air, but only intermittent. WNTC representatives finally went to the CCSA Senate and State SGA with a contingency request to purchase an FM stereo modulator. Both schools granted the request and WNTC finally got their long-awaited modulator.

After much jubilation, WNTC engineers installed their modulator only to find it had an intermittent connection and had to be sent back. After another delay and more phone bills WNTC's modulator came back in good working order!

To "hear" the new modulator at work, students have only to connect their FM radio to that funny looking thing on the wall called "cable connection". Be forewarned, the stereo signal on your radio will go on - but WNTC is not yet stereo. The stereo board is in its final design stages. Hopefully, funds permitting, WNTC will be stereo by January, 1976.